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# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **SCAG Aviation Task Force Approves Work Plan To Examine Regional Airport System**

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### **New Work Plan to Address Post-September 11<sup>th</sup> Impacts, Other Developments Affecting Southern California Airport System**

**LOS ANGELES** – To address the ongoing challenge of meeting future air passenger and cargo demands on the Southern California airport system, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Aviation Task Force approved a comprehensive two-year work plan today to update its Regional Aviation Strategy as part of the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The Aviation Task Force is comprised of Southern California elected officials and transportation leaders that helped develop the agency's current Regional Aviation Strategy, which was adopted by SCAG in April 2001.

"The work plan approved today will not only begin in earnest SCAG's effort to update its airport strategy for Southern California, it will also help our region establish tangible goals and priorities for implementing that long-term strategy," said Ventura County Supervisor Judy Mikels, chair of the Aviation Task Force.

The primary goal of the work will be to guide the long-term development of a safe and equitable Southern California airport system that is also environmentally friendly and economically viable. The effort also will examine new conditions that have occurred since the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> as well as other recent developments that could affect the future of individual airports in the region.

The comprehensive work plan will include a series of parallel efforts intended to facilitate policy updates to the Aviation Strategy and begin laying out the steps for implementing the plan, including:

- ***Regional Aviation Forecast Update:*** SCAG's new aviation forecast will develop new long-term passenger and cargo projections that attempt to account for changes in the airline industry, passenger travel habits and airport operations resulting from the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>.
- ***Regional Airspace Study:*** SCAG recently initiated an unprecedented regional airspace study that will test a range of aviation possibilities for their impact on regional airspace capacity. The study, funded through a grant by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will be completed in the fall of 2004, and preliminary findings will be considered in the process of adopting the updated Regional Aviation Strategy for the 2004 RTP.

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- ***County Input on Airport Development Plans:*** Existing and forecasted air passenger and cargo information will be provided to all six Southern California counties, with the counties providing their input and being asked how they would intend to meet its share of projected demand, to the extent possible.
- ***Performance Standards:*** For each scenario, individual airports will be examined through a series of well-defined performance standards to assess the environmental and economic impacts associated with each increment of potential airport development.
- ***Implementation Plan:*** SCAG will develop an all-encompassing implementation plan that includes a number of elements intended to help the newly adopted aviation strategy become a reality, including 1) a comprehensive regional airport ground access improvement program; 2) a strategy for developing high-speed rail connections between airports; 3) a plan detailing the potential costs and revenue sources of implementing the regional airport strategy; and 4) a plan outlining how a regional airport system would be operated and governed.

Today's meeting of the Aviation Task Force at SCAG is part of a series of monthly meetings until the Task Force makes its recommendations to SCAG's Transportation and Communications Committee in 2003. The task force will then meet quarterly to review the environmental evaluation of the adopted Regional Aviation Plan in the 2004 RTP Environmental Impact Report.

SCAG is the largest regional planning agency in the United States, functioning as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for six counties: Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and Ventura. The Southern California region encompasses a population exceeding 17 million people in an area of more than 38,000 square miles. As the designated MPO, SCAG develops regional plans for transportation, growth management, hazardous waste management, water resources, and air quality. For more information about the work of the Southern California Association of Governments, visit the SCAG Web site at [www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov).